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133 the N.W. and N. the hills—which almost merited the name of mountains—were peculiarly rugged, more especially towards their summits. About N.N.E. by compass from our camp, there was a pass formed by a dip or break in the range leading north, and through the mouth of the pass we could see the smoke of the hunting parties of the Araucanian Indians, who were, however, many leagues distant. Throughout Patagonia smoke is always visible at a great distance, and the practised eyes of the Indians can distinguish it from the clouds, when ordinary persons would be unable to discern it unless pointed out to them. On the southern and eastern sides of the valley lay a range of hills, the rugged summits of which rose from lower slopes of more regular swell, and presenting more even and down-like surfaces than those on the western and northern sides. Immediately above our encampment the hill of Henno, from which the valley is named, rose from the plain. Near the summit of this hill Orkeke and myself, who for amusement had ridden up to it, one day came across the bleached skeleton of a man, perhaps one of two young Argentines who, as I was subsequently informed, had travelled thus far in company with the Indians, and had been for some—or no—reason killed by them near this spot. In the surrounding hills red porphyry frequently cropped out, and also veins of a red agate, unlike the flint agate so common in all the plains of Patagonia. The rocks near the summit of the hills were generally of igneous formation, and on the slopes of these hills frequent springs gushed out, easily discoverable from a distance by the vivid
361 green of the grass growing round them. As we gazed down from the height of Henno, the valley lay before us like a picture; our few toldos were situated in a group to the east, on the south side of the stream; about a quarter of a mile to the north the thirty or forty toldos of the Northern Indians were pitched, and opposite to them, on the north side of the stream, those of the party commanded by Jackechan
517 or Juan. The scene was animated but peaceful: here might

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be seen a party of young men playing at ball, in another a man breaking a colt, and down by the side of the stream groups of girls bathing, or wandering in the swamps picking the wild spinach, which grew all along the margin of the water in great quantities. One day I went on an excursion with the children to pluck spinach and plunder the nests of wild ducks and upland geese, from which we returned laden with spoil, and in the evening a stew, *à la* Tehuelche, was made with ostrich grease, spinach, and eggs, which combination was universally approved of. Another day we went fishing, and after catching several with a hook and line, voted it slow work, so contrived a net by sewing two ponchos together, and waded into the stream dragged the shallow parts, and, notwithstanding the duck-weed, which rather impeded us, made several good hauls, the take consisting of the perch-like fish and a black species of cat-fish: the Indians, however, except Casimiro, would not eat the fish, and evidently regarded my enjoyment of them much as an Englishman would at first view their appreciation of blood. Another day we went on an expedition to dig up a species of root somewhat resembling a parsnip, but although we grubbed about for an hour our efforts were only scantily rewarded by a few small roots, which were given to the children. One roasted in the ashes, at Mrs. Orkeke's invitation I tasted, and found it rather tasteless and insipid.

During our stay in this pleasant resting-place the weather was bright and sunny, and on calm days warm, and the absence of rain almost made it appear like summer; but whenever the west wind blew, the piercing cold dispelled the passing illusion. The long delay which was necessary to recruit our horses, in anticipation of a campaign against the young guanaco and the wild cattle, was most acceptable to all the members of our party; and after the two preceding months of quarrels, real and suspected dangers, and forced marches, our present peaceable existence, though devoid of adventure, was thoroughly enjoyable. An occasional hunting

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Tehuelche friends. The gloriously warm weather, which, for a wonder, continued during our stay at Lilly-haik, as this station was named, rendered our residence there most enjoyable, and we revelled in the simple pleasures of the woods; sometimes three or four of us would go across the brook, and traversing a plain occupied by the horses and cattle, search for strawberries amongst the ravines of the neighbouring mountains, or climb the tall trees and gather the yellow insipid fungus adhering to the branches, or lie down amongst the wild violets and enjoy the *dolce far niente*. These Indian children of nature showed themselves as thoroughly able to appreciate the idleness of gathering fruit and flowers and roaming in the woods as school children on a holiday ramble. On one occasion Casimiro and several others proceeded in search of wood wherewith to construct saddles, and we felled several fine trees, selecting and cutting off suitable pieces of timber. It was hard work with blunt axes, but Indians are indefatigable when they once commence a task. After my spell at the axe I wandered off with a companion into the thicker forest in search of fungus to make tinder. Of this we found little, but thirst soon made us seek for water, and discover a delicious ice-cold rivulet, embowered with currant bushes bearing ripe fruit. Here we remained a short time smoking and picking currants, recumbent on the mossy turf, till a shout in the distance warned us that our companions were returning. On our way home we killed one of the flat toad-like lizards which the Indians regard as devilish; we also caught a young skunk, which Casimiro wished to keep as a pet for the children, but at my instance let it go and enjoy the delights of freedom. 'Fancy a tame skunk!' some may exclaim; but in Hinchel's toldo there were two skunks which, perfectly tame and as playful as kittens, ran about everywhere, never using their offensive powers, and sometimes getting lost for an hour or two caused a dreadful outcry to be raised by the children until they were found.

The hill slopes were a garden of calceolarias, alyssum, tiny